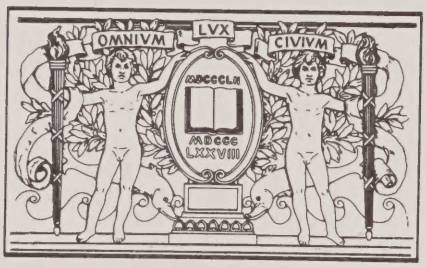
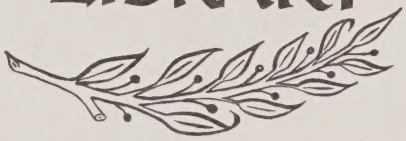
GOV DOC
A
1M3/B16
RA
86/8



BOSTON
PUBLIC
LIBRARY



98600723
GW

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS DEPARTMENT
RECEIVED
DEC 4 1986

A
113/316
RA
86/8

Update on Additions to Boston's Condominium Stock through December 31, 1985

Libby Fitzpatrick
Jeffrey Brown

June 2, 1986

Raymond L. Flynn, Mayor
City of Boston

Stephen Coyle, Director
Boston Redevelopment Authority

Alexander Ganz, Director
Research Department

Boston Redevelopment Authority
Board of Directors

Robert L. Farrell, Chairman
Joseph J. Walsh, Vice-Chairman
James K. Flaherty, Treasurer
Clarence Jones, Asst. Treasurer
William A. McDermott, Jr., Member
Kane Simonian, Secretary

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS DEPARTMENT
RECEIVED
DEC - 4 1985

Libby Fitzpatrick and
Jeffrey Brown
Boston Redevelopment Authority
Research Department
April 10, 1986

UPDATE ON ADDITIONS TO BOSTON'S CONDOMINIUM STOCK THROUGH 1985

Additions to the Condominium Stock through December 31, 1985

Summary

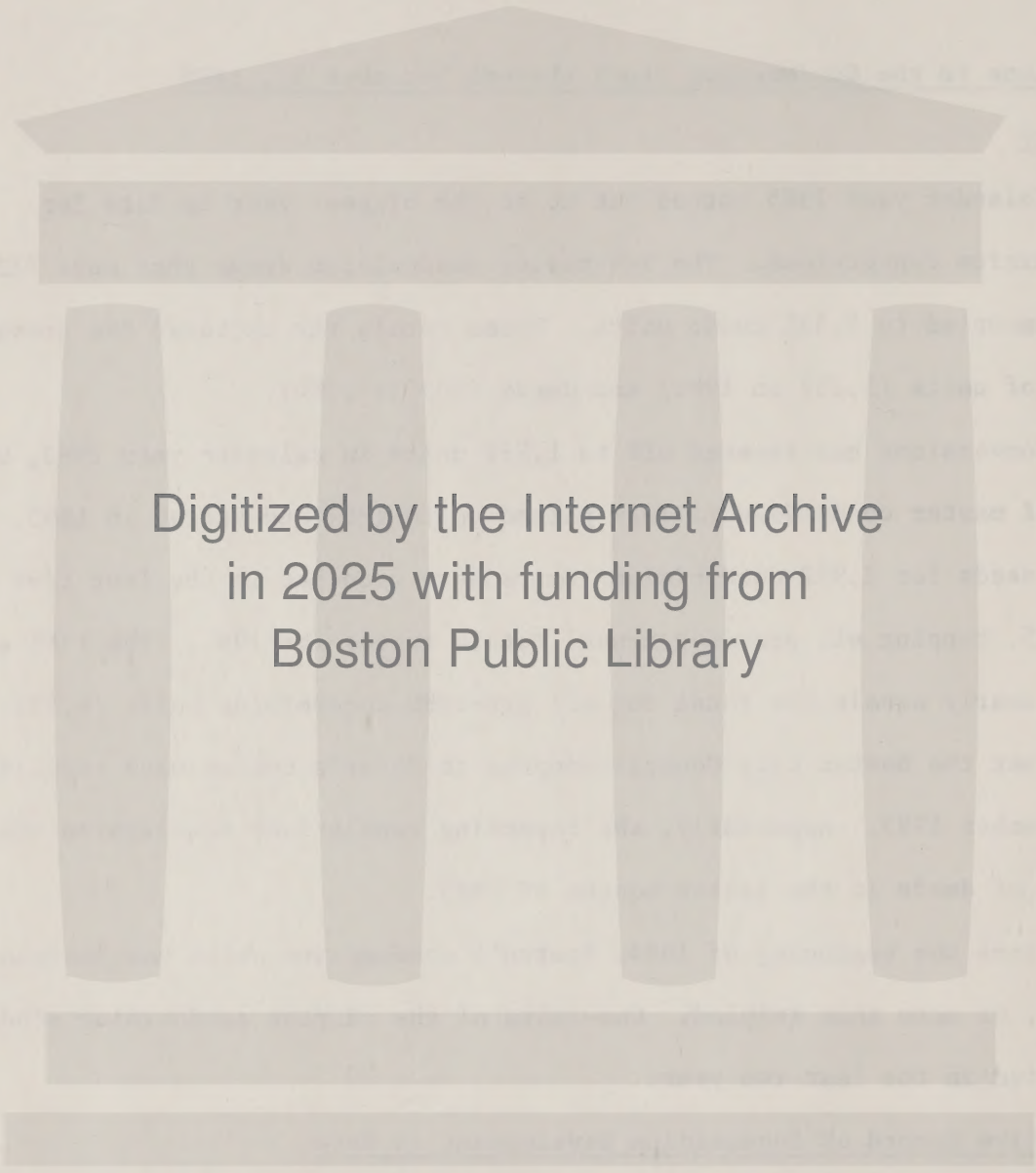
Calendar year 1985 turned out to be the biggest year to date for condominium conversions. The 348 master condominium deeds that were filed in 1985 amounted to 4,525 condo units. These totals far exceeded the previous highs of units (3,357 in 1981) and deeds (239 in 1984).

Conversions had tapered off to 1,869 units in calendar year 1983, but the pace of master condo deed filings picked up in 1984 and surged in 1985. In fact, deeds for 2,992 condominium units were recorded in the last five months of 1985, topping all previous annual totals except for 1981. The 1985 annual total nearly equals the total for all pre-1980 condominium units (4,531). Note that the Boston City Council adopted th Mayor's condominium regulations in December 1985. Apparently, the impending regulations accelerated the filing of deeds in the latter months of 1985.

Since the beginning of 1980, Boston's condominium stock has increased by 17,026, or more than tripled. One-third of the current condominium stock was converted in the last two years.

Cumulative Record of Condominium Development to Date

The total condominium stock as of December 31, 1985 was 21,557 units, or nine percent of the 249,200 units in Boston's total housing stock in 1985. At the time of the 1980 Census, between 5,000 and 6,000 condominium units had been registered or about two percent of the city's total housing stock. Since 1980, Boston's condominium stock has more than tripled, as condominium units increased by 15,166, see Table 1.


Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025 with funding from
Boston Public Library

https://archive.org/details/updateonaddition00bost

Boston Trends, 1969-1985

As reported in previous studies by the Research Department,* the pioneering phase of condominium development, 1969-1973, was characterized by conversion of older, high quality rental units in the Back Bay and Beacon Hill. Development amounted to 876 units or 4 percent of the current condominium stock. In 1973, condominium development had just begun to move into the North End/Waterfront area.

The consolidation phase, 1974 to 1977, brought a slower pace of condominium development, but a diversity of stock and expansion beyond the Back Bay and Beacon Hill area. During that period, 1,166 units, or 5 percent of the current stock, were registered. Conversions spread to the South End, Fenway, the North End/Waterfront, and the north slope of Beacon Hill. Conversions in this phase included lodging houses and recycled hotels, warehouses and surplus schools. In the downtown area, many condominiums were modestly priced, including former rental units that were sold "as is" to tenants or to new buyers. The first case of new construction of condominiums occurred in Jamaica Plain in that period.

During the first resurgence phase, 1978 to 1979, conversions, adaptive reuse and new construction accelerated. Developers added 2,489 units, or 12 percent of the current condominium stock during that period. In 1979, neighborhoods other than Back Bay-Beacon Hill had increasing shares of condominium development. Conversions of apartments and lodging houses in the South End, including St. Botolph Street, increased dramatically.

---

*See "Condominium Development in Boston," by Bonnie Heudorfer, the BRA, September 1980: "Condominium Development in Boston through June 30, 1983," by J. Huggins, T. Matsuwaki, J. Robertson and J. Brown, August 1984.

From 1980 through 1983, condominium development climbed to a peak in 1981 before leveling off in the next two years. In 1981, the City recorded over 200 developments, amounting to 3,357 units or 16 percent of the current stock. Every one of fifteen neighborhoods had condominium development in that year, led by Allston-Brighton, Back Bay-Beacon Hill, the Downtown and Fenway-Kenmore, see Table 2. In 1982 and 1983, the pace of condominium development slackened as mortgage interest rates soared and sales declined. Geographic dispersion continued as conversions reached annual highs in 1982 in East Boston, Charlestown, South Boston and the South End.

The second resurgence occurred in the last two years. While conversions reached a new peak in 1985, development expanded into the neighborhoods to an unprecedented degree. The following neighborhoods had the highest number of condominium conversions to date: East Boston, Charlestown, South End, Fenway/Kenmore, Allston/Brighton, Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, Roslindale and West Roxbury. At the same time, the Central area had its lowest number of conversions since 1980. From 1983 to 1985, the Back Bay/Beacon Hill area has shown a steady increase in the number of condominium units. Similar trends were evident in East Boston, Charlestown, South Boston, South End, Fenway/Kenmore, Allston/Brighton and Jamaica Plain.

In 1985, Allston/Brighton rose to a close second in total condominium stock, as master deeds were filed for 1,555 units, one-third of Boston's annual total. At the end of the year, Back Bay/Beacon Hill still led with 5,295 units to Allston/Brighton's 5,050 units.

Notably, the ratio of Boston's condominium stock to its rental housing stock dropped from one to 26.9 in 1980 to one to 7.5 in 1985. Rental units, numbering 162,200 in 1985, still dominate Boston's housing stock, but conversions diminish the rental stock each year.

Pre-Conversion Status of Units

Nearly all of the condominium units in Boston were converted from apartment buildings, lodging houses or single-family homes. As of July 31, 1985, only 8 percent of all condominium units were newly constructed or had been non-residential structures prior to conversion, including surplus schools, hotels, warehouses and other commercial buildings, see Table 4.

Apparently, many of the condominium units in Boston are rented, and, therefore, could be considered part of the rental stock. However, the implications for rent levels cloud the comparison. This topic requires more research on ownership patterns, sales prices and rents charged for condominiums.

Sources and Methods

For the years 1969-1982 and the first six months of 1983, the condominium addresses and number of units were taken from the City of Boston Assessing Department's engineers' list of condominiums. For July 1, 1983 through December 31, 1985, the addresses and numbers of units were obtained by inspecting all master condominium deeds in the Suffolk County Registry of Deeds. Each address was coded for ward, precinct, electoral district, census tract and planning district using Boston's Streets (Boston Public Works Department), Boston House Numbers by Census Tract (United Community Planning Corporation) and BRA maps. Peter Clenott of the Arson Prevention Commission did the research for master deeds dated March 12, 1985 through December 31, 1985. The BRA staff collected the data for mid-1983 through March 11, 1985. Ninety-five percent of the master condominium deeds filed in 1984 and the first seven months of 1985 have been rechecked to verify or correct the addresses and numbers of units. Peter Clenott and the staff of the Rent Equity Board have reviewed the condominium file extensively. Preliminary differences in lists compiled by the Rent Equity Board, the Arson Prevention

Commission and the BRA last summer have been reconciled. Consequently, tables and printouts dated March 12, 1986 should replace all earlier printouts from the BRA Research Department that were generated in the course of the current update effort.

Table 1

RESIDENTIAL CONDOMINIUMS IN THE CITY OF BOSTON
BY CALENDAR YEAR

YEAR	NUMBER OF CASES	NUMBER OF UNITS	PERCENT OF ALL CONDO UNITS
1969	1	8	0.0
1970	3	29	0.1
1971	7	208	1.0
1972	13	145	0.7
1973	24	486	2.3
1974	28	474	2.2
1975	17	218	1.0
1976	24	268	1.2
1977	21	206	1.0
1978	59	813	3.8
1979	158	1,676	7.8
1980	136	1,860	8.6
1981	207	3,357	15.6
1982	141	2,795	13.0
1983	130	1,873	8.7
1984	239	2,616	12.1
1985	348	4,525	21.0

TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES 1,556

TOTAL NUMBER OF UNITS 21,557

SOURCE: CITY OF BOSTON ASSESSING DEPARTMENT; SUFFOLK COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS.
PREPARED BY BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY RESEARCH DEPARTMENT,
MARCH 12, 1986.

Table 2

RESIDENTIAL CONDOMINIUMS IN THE CITY OF BOSTON
BY PLANNING DISTRICT BY CALENDAR YEAR

NUMBER OF CONDOMINIUM UNITS

PLANNING DISTRICT	1969-1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	TOTAL
1 EAST BOSTON	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	55	19	26	82	190
2 CHARLESTOWN	0	9	0	0	10	20	21	25	47	134	157	423
3 SOUTH BOSTON	0	0	0	42	75	15	56	146	3	28	105	470
4 CENTRAL	303	9	32	248	311	145	510	663	572	614	278	3,685
5 BACK BAY-BEACON HILL	1,128	124	86	318	714	407	623	656	219	495	525	5,295
6 SOUTH END	36	0	0	5	78	125	129	89	210	318	377	1,367
7 FENWAY-KENMORE	17	0	0	5	67	228	421	238	233	302	690	2,201
8 ALLSTON-BRIGHTON	3	0	88	50	225	591	1,060	751	369	358	1,555	5,050
9 JAMAICA PLAIN	12	126	0	0	40	160	148	28	111	197	256	1,078
10 ROXBURY	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	5	8
11 DORCHESTER	0	0	0	0	6	3	192	41	8	89	25	364
12 ROSLINDALE	0	0	0	0	16	64	36	12	0	12	68	208
13 WEST ROXBURY	69	0	0	145	134	0	72	87	82	11	400	1,000
14 HYDE PARK	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	0	0	0	2	34
15 MATTAPAN-FRANKLIN FIELD	0	0	0	0	0	102	46	4	0	32	0	184
TOTAL	1,568	268	206	813	1,676	1,860	3,357	2,795	1,873	2,616	4,525	21,557

SOURCE: CITY OF BOSTON ASSESSING DEPARTMENT; SUFFOLK COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS.
PREPARED BY BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY RESEARCH DEPARTMENT,
MARCH 12, 1986.

Table 3

RESIDENTIAL CONDOMINIUMS IN THE CITY OF BOSTON
BY WARD BY CALENDAR YEAR

NUMBER OF CONDOMINIUM UNITS

WARD	1969-1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	TOTAL
WARD 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	55	19	26	82	190
WARD 2	0	9	0	0	10	20	21	25	47	134	157	423
WARD 3	303	9	32	25?	267	157	503	645	623	637	199	3,628
WARD 4	45	0	0	5	93	215	184	227	178	306	580	1,833
WARD 5	1,136	124	86	318	798	499	914	740	381	610	781	6,387
WARD 6	0	0	0	42	75	15	56	113	0	28	73	402
WARD 7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	33	3	0	43	79
WARD 8	0	0	0	0	0	5	16	0	10	36	77	144
WARD 9	0	0	0	0	0	18	11	4	13	76	110	232
WARD 10	0	4	0	0	16	0	106	6	108	122	101	463
WARD 11	12	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	6	37	61
WARD 12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WARD 13	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	3	0	71	6	86
WARD 14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WARD 15	0	0	0	0	0	3	38	0	0	0	0	41
WARD 16	0	0	0	0	0	0	154	38	8	18	6	224
WARD 17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
WARD 18	0	0	0	0	0	166	78	4	0	32	47	327
WARD 19	0	122	0	0	40	157	42	34	3	81	141	620
WARD 20	69	0	0	145	134	0	108	87	82	11	400	1,036
WARD 21	3	0	88	50	144	186	966	582	375	337	1,453	4,184
WARD 22	0	0	0	0	93	416	149	199	23	85	230	1,195
TOTAL	1,568	268	206	813	1,676	1,860	3,357	2,795	1,873	2,616	4,525	21,557

SOURCE: CITY OF BOSTON ASSESSING DEPARTMENT; SUFFOLK COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS.

PREPARED BY BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY RESEARCH DEPARTMENT,
MARCH 12, 1986.

Table 4

PRE-CONVERSION STATUS OF CONDOMINIUM UNITS,
BY YEAR OF CONVERSION, 1969-1985*
Preliminary Estimates

	1969-1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985**	Total
Nonresidential[1]	877	0	66	235	177	84	20	1,459
Residential[2]	3,654	1,845	3,285	2,546	1,692	2,532	1,513	17,067
Total Condo Units	4,531	1,845	3,351	2,781	1,869	2,616	1,533	18,526
Nonresidential Percent of Total	19.4	0.0	2.0	8.5	9.5	3.2	1.3	7.9

---

* 1969-1979 data are based on "Condominium Development in Boston," (BRA, 1980); 1980-85 estimates are based on the BRA Research Department's computer file of residential development. A few small conversion cases may have been missed due to method of compilation. Estimates of conversion of nonresidential structures from a more exacting method are forthcoming.

** January 1 through July 31, 1985.

1 Newly constructed or converted from schools, hotels, warehouses or other nonresidential structures.

2 Converted from apartments, lodging houses, single-family homes or other residential structures. BRA Research Department, November 4, 1985.